

14. (Amended) A polysaccharide sponge according to claim 1 for use as a matrix, substrate or scaffold for growing mammalian cells in vitro.

39. (Amended) An artificial organ equivalent comprising a polysaccharide sponge according to claim 1 and representative cells of said organ, said cells having been grown on said sponge in vitro to the stage wherein said cells are fully active and equivalent to the active cells of said organ, said artificial organ being suitable for transplantation or implantation into a patient in need thereof following organ damage, removal or dysfunction.